United Nations S/PV.6720

Security Council

Sixty-seventh year

Provisional

6720th meeting

Wednesday, 22 February 2012, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ohin	(Togo)
Members:	Azerbaijan	Mr. Mehdiyev
	China	Mr. Yang Tao
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Bonne
	Germany	Mr. Berger
	Guatemala	Mr. Rosenthal
	India	Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri
	Morocco	Mr. Bouchaara
	Pakistan	Mr. Tarar
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Pankin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Mr. DeLaurentis

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/43)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506.

12-23800 (E)

Please recycle

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (S/2012/43)

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Australia, Brazil, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Timor-Leste to participate in this meeting.

On behalf of the Council, I welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and request the Protocol Officer to escort him to his seat at the Council table.

José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ioannis Vrailas, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2012/43, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste.

I now give the floor to Ms. Haq.

Ms. Haq: Let me begin by acknowledging the presence of Nobel Peace Laureate His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste. President Ramos-Horta tells me often about the request he made in 2006, in this very Chamber, to establish the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). It is remarkable that he is in this Chamber today to discuss the end of that same Mission. Under his leadership, as well as that of Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, Frente Revolucionária do Timor-Leste Independente (Fretilin) Secretary-General Mari Alkatiri and others, Timor-Leste has made significant strides in advancing peace and stability. In the light of the overall stable situation, we are continuing to plan for the expected close of UNMIT by December 2012. Indeed, as part of our joint transition planning with the Government and other stakeholders, we are already discussing the post-2012 engagement of the United Nations with Timor-Leste, so as to facilitate decisions of the next Government and the Council. In the meantime, UNMIT continues to support Timor-Leste's efforts to ensure that the prevailing stability and security continue through 2012 and beyond.

Timor-Leste is about to hold presidential and parliamentary elections, and we have every reason to believe that they will be successful. On 13 January, the President signed a decree establishing 17 March as the date of the presidential election. Thirteen candidates, including two women, whose candidacies were approved by the Court of Appeal will contest the election. The legally established campaign period starts on 29 February and ends on 14 March. A run-off, if necessary, will be held in the third week of April. The voter registration period closed on 11 January. According to the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration, 628,454 people were registered. That is an increase of 89,015 voters from the registration results in 2007, reflecting improved civic education and outreach efforts on the part of the Technical Secretariat, improved statistics through the census, and the country's high rate of population growth. The parliamentary election, the date of which is yet to be established, is likely to take place in late June.

The electoral management bodies are striving to deliver transparent and fair elections. As mentioned in successive reports of the Secretary-General, their capacities have increased since 2007, and there has been an accompanying decrease in the level of United Nations support. Still, the United Nations continues to provide integrated technical assistance through the joint United Nations Development Programme and UNMIT electoral support team. The final group of 130 United Nations Volunteers, who arrived in January, have deployed throughout the country to support the Technical Secretariat for Electoral Administration and

the National Electoral Commission with activities that include operational planning, logistics, and voter and civic education. That work is complemented by operational support by UNMIT police to the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) during the elections, and our good-offices efforts to help sustain a constructive political environment.

During the electoral process, the Secretary-General is planning to issue messages commending Timor-Leste on its achievements and calling on all Timorese to ensure that the presidential and parliamentary elections are credible, transparent and peaceful. Presidential candidates and political party leaders are acting in that spirit; their constructive messages about the need for peaceful elections are central to maintaining public confidence in the elections and political stability. My senior staff and I have been travelling to many of the districts to get a first-hand sense of the situation on the ground and the readiness of the local authorities to carry out the elections. For example, in Baucau on 20 January, I met with the district administration and village chiefs and was reassured to hear their expressions of confidence in election preparations and public security.

National institutions are also taking increased ownership of dialogue processes around elections. The National Electoral Commission is developing a national unity pact likely to be signed at the end of this month by all presidential candidates and political parties. As the Council may recall, UNMIT facilitated a similar pact in 2007. It is encouraging that this important work is now being done by national institutions.

Maintaining a favourable security environment is the most important task for the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). Some incidents involving martial arts groups occurred in Dili in December, with the alleged involvement of some members of the PNTL. In an effort to prevent such incidents from becoming a trend, the Council of Ministers recently adopted a resolution prohibiting martial arts group activities for one year. The PNTL has also identified seven officers who took part in the December incidents. Three officers have been recommended for dismissal and the remaining four were recommended for written reprimand. Following through on these recommendations through decisive actions is important to maintaining public confidence in the police service.

The PNTL, with UNMIT police support, is getting ready to ensure security during the electoral period. A live exercise involving all security forces in the country, including the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) and the international security forces, took place on 8 February. The President and I were present to see this. The exercise tested the ability of the respective forces to respond to possible security incidents during elections, in accordance with their respective roles and responsibilities.

In this context, I was heartened by the public statements of the head of the armed forces, Major-General Lere Anan Timur, regarding F-FDTL's role during the elections as a support to the PNTL, if and when requested by the appropriate civilian authorities. Other joint PNTL-United Nations police election-related activities include threat assessments conducted in all districts, security assessments of all polling centres, and election-specific training. I am confident that these initiatives will help to ensure our joint preparedness to respond to any eventuality during the electoral period.

Preparations for the elections come in addition to other capacity-building activities supported by UNMIT police. Overall, progress of the Joint Development Plan is encouraging, with 37 per cent of the 588 planned activities completed as of 7 February. However, UNMIT is facing difficulties in extending police officers in key advisory positions. As the PNTL will focus heavily on elections security in the coming months, maintaining continuity and momentum in our capacity-building work is becoming even more important. Once again, I encourage police-contributing countries to grant extension of officers in these positions.

My assessment is that the PNTL will fulfil its role in maintaining stability through 2012, with support from UNMIT police, as required and requested. Of course, building a professional and effective police force is a major task that will continue long after UNMIT's departure. I very much hope that bilateral and multilateral support will be forthcoming to help the PNTL's further development. Already, the institution is on the right path, and it will continue along that path as long as it demonstrates its commitment to integrity, professionalism and capacity-building.

The Government and UNMIT have made good progress in advancing UNMIT's transition. On

22 December, the Prime Minister signed a decree establishing an inter-ministerial committee to manage the transfer of certain UNMIT assets to national authorities — a strong sign of the Government's commitment to an orderly transition. On 2 February, the High-level Committee on Transition reviewed the encouraging progress in the implementation of the Joint Transition Plan. The main challenge now is to ensure that institutions taking on new responsibilities have sufficient capacity and funding to carry them out effectively.

In close collaboration with the Government, we are also working to ensure that many of the Mission's activities can transition seamlessly to the United Nations country team in order to safeguard the country's gains. We have developed a portfolio of 34 projects requiring $75 million in funding from 2012 to 2014, which leverage the country team's expertise in four areas linked to UNMIT's work. The portfolio has been approved by all relevant line ministries. This morning, President Ramos-Horta, the Government, UNMIT and the United Nations Development Group presented the portfolio to Member States. I was delighted with the positive reception, and hope that bilateral support to United Nations agencies working in Timor-Leste will be forthcoming.

More broadly, I hope that the Council will recognize both the progress made in key areas of UNMIT's mandate and the requirement for further consolidation in the areas of justice, governance, human rights, and capacity-building for the PNTL. Such consolidation will very much tie in with the work of the Group of Seven Plus on the new deal and the peace and statebuilding goals — policy initiatives that have been spearheaded by the Government of Timor-Leste, in particular Finance Minister Emilia Pires.

Transition planning also entails improving the capacity of national staff so that they can continue to make a positive contribution to Timor-Leste's development after UNNMIT leaves. UNMIT has an extensive capacity-building programme to help its national staff gain certification in various technical and administrative areas. On 26 January, we held the latest graduation ceremony for national staff participating in this programme.

At the end of January, a joint team from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Development Group and UNMIT conducted a detailed assessment of possible options for the United Nations post-UNMT engagement in Timor-Leste based on those identified in the Joint Transition Plan. The team sought the views of a wide range of interlocutors, including the President, the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister — who is the overall focal point in the Government for transition — and other Government officials. The team also met with representatives of political parties, civil society, media and the international community. I would like to thank the Government of Timor-Leste, especially its focal point for post-UNMIT arrangements, Foreign Minister Zacarias da Costa, for the warm welcome extended to the team and the high level of attention accorded to the transition by the Government.

In its meetings, the team encountered a remarkable degree of coherence in the views of different stakeholders. Interlocutors consistently expressed the view that, on the understanding that things go well this year, there should be no uniformed United Nations personnel in Timor-Leste beyond 2012, but that there is a need for a small political presence with a link to the Secretariat, and through it to the Security Council. Such a presence, it was suggested, should focus on consolidating a culture of democratic governance, nurturing a generation of future leaders, consolidating gains in the areas of justice, governance, human rights, and providing civilian advice to the PNTL. Consultations on the post-UNMIT UN presence will continue in the coming months on the understanding that any final decision on this matter will be taken only following consultation with the Government formed after the parliamentary elections. The early planning currently under way will enable well-informed discussions with the newly elected Government and lay the groundwork for a seamless transition to a new form of partnership.

The year 2012 is a critical one for Timor-Leste, marked by several key anniversaries, including the tenth anniversary of the restoration of independence. I count that this year will give us the opportunity to celebrate peaceful elections, an orderly transition to a new Government, continued stability and security and further development of the PNTL's technical capacities.

This year will also be a critical year for the United Nations' long engagement with Timor-Leste. In view of the developments that have been outlined in

his report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General has asked that the Council extend UNMIT's current mandate until 31 December 2012. Following consultations with the new Government, and within 60 days of its formation, the Secretary-General would submit a report containing his suggestions on UNMIT's anticipated withdrawal and the post-UNMIT United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. That report could form the basis of a Council meeting in September or October to enable a seamless transition to the post-UNMIT presence. As the security situation permits, we envisage that UNMIT police will begin a well-paced drawdown following the parliamentary elections and the formation of the new Government.

In conclusion, let me thank all of the United Nations personnel in Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank the leadership of Timor-Leste, and again President Ramos-Horta, with whom we are here today. Finally, allow me to thank the people of Timor-Leste for their determination to establish a stable and enduring peace for their country.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ms. Haq for the briefing.

I now give the floor to President Ramos-Horta.

President Ramos-Horta: May I first introduce my delegation. I am accompanied by the Minister of Finance, Mrs. Emilia Pires; Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Alberto Carlos; my deputy Chief of Civilian Staff, Mr. Hernani Coelho; and, of course, our Permanent Representative, Mrs. Sofia Borges, whom all members of the Security Council know.

Deputy Minister Alberto Carlos has 11 years' experience with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, including two and a half years in emergency operations in the Sudan and eight years in Timor-Leste, with two years as head of the office.

Mr. Hernani Coelho served four and half years as a policy adviser with the United Nations Development Programme in Timor-Leste, and three years as our Ambassador in Canberra. Mrs. Emilia Pires worked for years in the donors coordinating unit of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) in the donors coordinating unit. After studying at the London School of Economics, she served at the World Bank in Gaza, Palestine. With no party affiliation, Mrs. Pires was invited and accepted the challenge of heading the Ministry of Finance for Timor-Leste, and has served in that position for nearly five years.

As members can see, like others in my country, those compatriots have had long and rich experience in both the national and international arenas and have served in challenging field missions.

At this juncture, I would like to thank the Permanent Representative and Ambassador of South Africa for agreeing to serve as coordinator of the Core Group for Timor-Leste. I would also like to thank Brazil for its previous leadership of the Group.

The year 2012 will mark another milestone in our history with the United Nations. I have lost count of the number of times I have walked the halls of the United Nations since 1975. As a point of curiosity, when I first came to the United Nations, Yakov Malik of the former Soviet Union was here. Members can therefore imagine how long I have known the United Nations. I also knew many others who have since passed from the scene or passed away.

Between 1975 and 1999, many of my trips to New York were discouraging, but we continued our struggle. Finally, after many years, the vast majority of the population chose independence in the popular consultation administered by the United Nations Mission in East Timor. That was followed by UNTAET, led by our dear and terribly missed friend Sergio Vieira de Mello, and subsequent United Nations missions.

In 2006 it was with much regret that I had to return to the Council to ask once again for assistance after civil disturbances affected Timor-Leste. That was a difficult time for me and for our people. However, the events of 2006 have to be put into context. Barely four years had passed since the restoration of independence in May of 2002. Nearly all States undergo those types of traumatic experiences at some point in their histories. The mark of a successful State is that it learns from such experiences and emerges stronger and is determined to ensure that they do not reoccur.

In that regard, the people of Timor-Leste are committed to ensuring that the prevailing peace and stability continue through 2012 and beyond. I can confirm from my many travels across the country, including to the most remote areas, that the Timorese

people are united in our commitment to peace and our desire for a better future.

I am very pleased to once again address this body, this time in much happier circumstances than those that prevailed in Timor-Leste in the first half of 2006, when Timor-Leste appeared to be racing towards the edge of an abyss. In May of that year, weeks into the crisis, I hastily travelled to New York to address the Council and to plead with it to urgently assist us in restoring law and order. I said then, in describing the atmosphere in the city, "Dili is a city on the edge; fear is palpable". In retrospect, I can only say today that the 2006 crisis could have been averted. It had its origin in minor but unresolved problems in the defence force that were allowed to fester and then spilled over into the police and ultimately into the streets. Today I speak before the Council in very different circumstances. Dili is a bustling city, full of life. Today it is peace that is palpable. Peace has returned to our cities, our communities, our streets, our schools and our homes.

My Office took a number of initiatives to address the root causes of the 2006 crisis, and to foster a culture of peace and non-violence, bearing in mind that peace has to grow from within ourselves as individuals, within families and communities. It cannot be achieved by formal agreements and declarations or by Government decrees alone or by police action. Peace is a process, sometimes a long one — too long. It can be achieved through a formal political process; but, to be sustained, we have to deal with human beings as individuals, communities and real people with traumas, emotions and anger, but also with hopes, with hearts and feelings.

In 2009 we launched the Dili-City of Peace vision, an initiative built on a series of monthly dialogues with communities in all regions of the country. Under the slogan "The Road to Peace and National Unity", it included major sports and cultural initiatives — the Mount Ramelau Cultural and Music Festival; the Tour de Timor, which is now in its fourth year; and the Dili International Marathon in early May, which is in its third year — among other initiatives aimed at restoring hope, pride and faith in our people. The peace campaign is enhanced by fast-tracked anti-poverty initiatives, which include building simple homes for extremely poor households, building or refurbishing schools, and supporting income-generating schemes for very poor families.

With humility we acknowledge and are conscious that no single person or institution can single-handedly deliver peace, security and stability. It is the work of all of us in Timor-Leste — the Government, political leaders, civil society, churches, and all who are committed to lasting peace. Healing the wounds in communities requires patient effort, with special attention given to the wounds of the soul. Peace must be built block by block, community by community, and it requires unlimited patience and care every day, every week, through working together, connecting with common people, being accessible to them, listening and communicating, making them feel that leaders do care about their suffering, needs and dreams.

Almost five years into my mandate as President and that of the Fourth Constitutional Government led by Prime Minister Xanana Gusmão, I am both pleased that much has been achieved but sad that too much remains to be realized. I must also state here that we would not have come this far without the generous assistance of the international community, the United Nations through the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), specialized agencies and programmes, our many bilateral partners — large and not so large — and our closest neighbours. Hence, I wish to thank all for their generous and steady engagement with us from 1999 to 2002 and again since 2006.

I wish in particular to reiterate our people's gratitude to the Governments and peoples of Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and Portugal, who in 2006, in response to our request for urgent assistance, promptly dispatched to our shores a robust force that, working closely with Timorese leaders, succeeded in preventing the worst from happening. Malaysia, a fellow South-East Asian neighbour, displayed true regional and South-South solidarity, impressive professionalism and preparedness in deploying in record time air and sea-borne forces thousands of miles away from its shores. At its peak in 2006-2007, the combined Australia-New Zealand forces present on our soil totalled 3,500 servicemen and women.

Today that number is approximately 450. They have not been engaged in operational policing duty since 2009, but have been extremely effective in assisting with humanitarian and engineering training for our defence force. Within a week of our appeal for assistance in 2006, from 20,000 miles away Portugal deployed by air a company of its elite force, the

prestigious Guarda Nacional Republicana, with all the required equipment, including armoured personnel carriers, medical units and more. The Republic of Indonesia has been a good neighbour and a good friend, ensuring that our common borders are kept safe even during the turmoil in Dili. To all, I reiterate our sincere admiration and the eternal gratitude of our people.

This is an eventful year for our people. We will celebrate the tenth anniversary of the restoration of independence and will be holding two major elections: the presidential election on 17 March and the legislative election in the last week of June. Ten years on, we can draw some satisfaction from the fact that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report of October 2010 accorded Timor-Leste a human development index value of 0.502, placing our country in the medium human development category. This was an increase from 0.428 in 2005 and 0.375 at independence.

Since 2005, life expectancy at birth in Timor-Leste has increased by more than two years and now averages 62.1 years. The gross national product per capita increased 228 per cent during the same period to over $5,000. Average annual growth has been double-digit for the past four years and real non-oil gross domestic product growth remains strong.

School enrolment in Timor-Leste has jumped from a modest 63 per cent in 2006 to over 90 per cent for basic education, according to the 2010 national census. In the past three years, close to 200,000 adults have graduated from illiteracy to functioning literacy, and Timor-Leste will proclaim full adult literacy by 2015.

In the health sector, as in the adult education sector, significant progress has been made, with much of the credit going to Cuba. Infant mortality and the mortality of children under five years old have all been dramatically reduced. Incidences of malaria and dengue and the prevalence of poverty have decreased.

There cannot be a nobler mission than that of rescuing our fellow human beings from the centuries-old illness of leprosy. With the support of the Nippon Foundation and the World Health Organization (WHO) and the commitment and dedication of its patron, Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, WHO Goodwill Ambassador for the Elimination of Leprosy, the incidence of the disease in Timor-Leste is now less than one case per 10,000 people. Leprosy is considered by the WHO to have been medically eliminated in Timor-Leste, for the first time in centuries.

Here, I wish to duly acknowledge the generous contribution of the European Commission, our second-largest development partner. Other bilateral donors, public and private, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies have all contributed generously, and we are forever grateful to all.

However, as proud as we are of our achievements thus far, we are also very aware of the daunting challenges still to be overcome. Poverty has seen a significant reduction as its prevalence declined from 49 per cent in 2007 to 41 per cent two years later, according to estimates of the World Bank. But this means that poverty is still high and remains a major challenge. Child malnutrition is extremely high and is an indictment of us all, we the Timorese leaders and our partners. Tuberculosis remains rampant and is our number one health problem.

While we acknowledge shortcomings and failures, it is time that our bilateral and multilateral partners, including international NGOs, accept their share of responsibility for the failures in this very critical field. Our public administration is still lagging on procedures and lacking qualified human resources. We are committed to improving efficiency in budget expenditures and State investment in basic infrastructure. Access to clean water, sanitation, public health and education are key priorities that demand more robust investment now and in the years to come.

As the UNDP *Human Development Report* and other indicators show, we have rebounded strongly from the brief periods of instability. The political situation in Timor-Leste in recent years has been remarkably free of tension. Ours is an open society. Transparency in our public life is a process that we have committed ourselves to promoting and to deepening, with the assistance of the international community.

As many here know, Timor-Leste is fortunate in that it is relatively rich in mineral resources. We have a petroleum fund that is carefully managed to ensure that it shall benefit Timor-Leste for years to come. The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative rates Timor-Leste as the best performer in Asia and third in

the world in terms of accountability and transparency in the management of our petroleum resources.

In the pursuit of good governance and transparency, our National Parliament has enacted an anti-corruption law. We have since created an anti-corruption body. The offices of the Ombudsman and the investigative powers of the Prosecutor-General have been strengthened. Both have seen robust investment in organization and training.

We have a dynamic multiparty democracy, with nine parties represented in the National Parliament. Almost 30 per cent of elected members of Parliament are women. Several women hold key ministerial portfolios. Thirteen candidates have now been confirmed for the presidential election on 17 March. I must have been doing a very poor job as President over the past four years, since so many people now want to take the job away from me. I am also a candidate among the 13. Twenty-four political parties have registered for the legislative elections — 24 political parties in a country of 1 million. I always tell our people that the United States, a country of 300 million and a super-Power, has two parties. Indonesia, a country of 250 million, has five parties represented in Parliament. With 1 million people, we now have 24 parties registered.

I can only hope that the electorate is wiser than the aspiring politicians and cast its votes on a handful of the better known political parties in order to ensure stable, functioning majorities. Because I have spoken ad nauseam in my country about this issue, I have not earned the sympathy of the aspiring politicians with my frequent blunt appeal to voters not to waste their votes on the new, smaller political parties.

We have ratified all major international human rights treaties and complied with reporting obligations. According to Reporters Without Borders, Timor-Leste has some of the freest media in the region. We are proud that we have a very liberal, humanist Constitution that prohibits the death penalty and life in prison. The maximum prison sentence in Timor-Leste is 25 years.

Together, we have developed our vision for national development, and last July we launched our Strategic Development Plan, which will help us translate our vision into reality. Timor-Leste's success is also the United Nations success. UNMIT, led by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ms. Ameerah Haq, has made real contributions since it was established in 2006, most obviously in the areas of good offices and public security and policing. UNMIT has also provided important assistance in the areas of the rule of law, governance, justice and human rights.

By the end of this year, we would like to see peacekeeping come to a close and to form a new partnership with the United Nations. I wish to be clear. We need and want international partnership, underpinned by a modest United Nations mission in line with our country's real needs and adjusted to the evolving reality on the ground. To achieve that, we have established a High-level Committee on Transition, which I chair with the support of the Prime Minister and the Special Representative. We meet every other month and have developed a plan for the transition, which the three of us signed on 19 September 2011. The level of engagement on the part of both the Government and the United Nations is steadfast, and I am confident that the plan will be implemented.

In January, discussions began between the Government and the United Nations on potential options for the post-UNMIT United Nations role. The emerging consensus is that the United Nations role could include support to further enhance democratic institutions, capacity-building of the security sector institutions, in particular the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste, our national police force, and continued support in areas such as governance, justice and human rights. The Government and all stakeholders will continue to be actively engaged in these discussions to ensure that the best option that emerges is one that is tailored to the specific needs and priorities of Timor-Leste — bearing in mind that, by August 2012, there will be a new Timorese Government that will make the final decision on that matter.

In closing, I would like to invite everyone here to Timor-Leste in 2012 to see for themselves how far our country has come, to partake in the anniversary celebrations we have planned throughout the year, and to visit our mountains and swim in our pristine waters. I pray every day to our God, the Almighty and the Merciful, to bestow on the members of the Council the unique qualities of leadership: vision, compassion and courage.

This collective security body, set up after the tragedy of the Second World War to spare humankind

the scourge of wars, is often called upon to prevent or to end wars. Expectations are as high as the suffering and desperation of those seeking help. Often those expectations are not met in a timely fashion, and people's faith in and illusions about the idealistic United Nations they have imagined in their desperation are shattered. But the sad fact is that too often, there is not much that outside forces can do to influence the course of events in a particular country. But the Security Council can always offer words of support and hope. The Council might not be able to mitigate the suffering of all but it can help some. It might not be able to offer shelter and safe haven to all, but it can accommodate some. It might not be able to save 1,000 lives, but it can try to save at least one life.

Too often, regimes fail to seize the opportunities offered them to walk away in safety and with some semblance of honour, save themselves and spare the further suffering of others. And too often, the parties to a conflict miscalculate, underestimate each other and overestimate their respective strength, believing that they can outsmart and defeat their adversary if they just persist, and all they achieve is further suffering of the people.

At times, the Council is criticized for failing to act. Sometimes the critics are right; sometimes they are wrong and unfair in their sweeping judgments. But I know that the Council does what it can and as much as it can, because that is the reality of our world.

Before coming here — this is not part of my prepared speech — I almost cancelled my trip because a brother-in-law of mine passed away the day before. But I decided to come to New York anyway to share with the Council the good news of what is happening in at least one corner of the world. As I watched the nightly news on Al-Jazeera, the BBC or CNN, and saw the Council try to manage many challenging conflict situations around the world, I thought to myself that maybe I should go, not only to ask for help but to bring those people dealing with these challenges around the world some good news. I do bring good news from Timor-Leste, hoping that before the Council turns shortly to manage other situations, such as that in the Middle East, my news about what the Council and we have achieved will be of comfort.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank President Ramos-Horta for his statement.

I shall now give the floor to members of the Security Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): It is a pleasure for us to see you presiding over this meeting, Sir. My delegation wishes once more to welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, to the Security Council. We welcome his report on the progress attained by his country. We also wish to offer our condolences on the passing his brother-in-law. We also thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq, for her comprehensive briefing on the latest developments in Timor-Leste.

South Africa is pleased to extend its congratulations to Timor-Leste on the ten-year anniversary of its independence. That is a milestone, not only for the Government and peoples of Timor-Leste, but also for all peace-loving people of the world who continue to champion the right to self-determination. As an indication of remarkable progress, Timor-Leste has moved from being the host of a United Nations peacekeeping mission to a country that has deployed personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions such as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and United Nations Mission in the Sudan. That is testament to the strengthened capacity of the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste and to the will of the Timorese authorities to positively contribute to international peace and security. We are also encouraged by the interest expressed by Timor-Leste in joining in and playing an important neighbourly role in the regional community of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

This year is also one in which we will see a drawdown of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the accession of complete authority by the Timorese Government to the full functioning of its security institutions. During the reporting period, we have seen general stability in Timor-Leste through further improvements in the political and security situations. We welcome the strong commitment of the leadership and other stakeholders in Timor-Leste to fostering national dialogue and peaceful and inclusive participation in democratic processes, and its ongoing efforts to promote continued peace, stability and unity.

In the area of governance and institution-building, the Timorese authorities have adopted

additional legislation to further strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of State institutions. We are pleased to note the progress made by the Timorese authorities in preparing for the upcoming presidential and legislative elections later this year. The electoral process will further consolidate the entrenchment of democracy and stability in the country. We are particularly encouraged by the ongoing efforts of the electoral management bodies to increase the participation of women and youth in the electoral process. We commend the political leadership for the commitment it has expressed in holding elections in a climate of peace and stability. Continued dialogue among the political leaders in the run-up to the election will be important to ensuring a peaceful outcome. Accordingly, the dialogue among national leaders co-hosted by President Ramos-Horta and the Bishop of Baucau, which is scheduled to be held prior to the elections, will bring them closer to achieving that goal.

While recognizing the progress made in many areas, much more still needs to be done, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/43). A strong and effective Timorese-led security apparatus to effectively deal with security threats is key. In that regard, we have witnessed the resumption of full policing responsibilities by the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) in pursuit of the implementation of the PNTL-UNMIT police Joint Development Plan. There has also been a continued focus by the PNTL on operational capacity, with technical advice from UNMIT police, in preparation for the coming electoral processes. There remains a continuing need for support to the PNTL, further institutional development and capacity-building. We therefore request UNMIT, in the remainder of this year, to continue to support the PNTL.

Truth and reconciliation are important to the further consolidation of Timor's long-term stability. Further progress towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship would have a positive impact on the long-term peace and stability of Timor-Leste.

South Africa is pleased with the progress in the implementation of the Joint Transition Plan as UNMIT prepares to terminate its mandate. We support the Secretary-General's contention that the Joint Transition Plan should be accompanied by regular review to ensure its responsiveness to developments on the ground. South Africa maintains that the nature and role of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste once UNMIT's mandate has ended is a matter that should be left for the Timorese authorities to decide and on which they should take the lead.

It is a singular honour for South Africa to be called upon to play a lead role in the situation in Timor-Leste in the Security Council. We wish to thank Council members which have worked constructively on the draft resolution, which, inter alia, extends UNMIT's mandate until 31 December 2012 and endorses the plan for its phase-down, in accordance with the wishes of the Government of Timor-Leste and conditions on the ground following the successful completion of the 2012 electoral process. We look forward to the unanimous adoption of the draft resolution on Timor-Leste.

I am very sure that all of us have taken note of President Ramos-Horta's invitation to the Security Council to visit his great country in 2012.

Mr. Manjeev Singh Puri (India): I thank you, Sir, for convening today's debate on the situation in Timor-Leste. I would like to extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, to the Security Council and thank him for his statement. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, Ms. Ameerah Haq, for her comprehensive briefing.

The Secretary-General's latest report (S/2012/43) has provided us with an opportunity to reflect on the latest developments as the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) prepares to draw down by the end of this year. It is a matter of great satisfaction that the overall situation in Timor-Leste remains calm and stable and that the country is firmly on the path to long-term peace, stability and development. We are indeed encouraged by President Horta's assessment of the progress achieved so far.

This year could be an important milestone for the consolidation of democratic transition in Timor-Leste. As the country marks the tenth anniversary of the restoration of its independence, presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled later this year. The continued and active engagement of all political parties in the democratic processes and the forthcoming elections are an encouraging indicator of Timor-Leste's abiding commitment to democracy. We

are happy to note that there has been steady progress towards organizing those elections and that an enabling legislative framework has already been put in place. We are appreciative of the technical and logistical support extended by the United Nations and the international community towards holding the elections.

We compliment the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) on its efforts towards institutional development and capacity-building. The PNTL has successfully assumed the responsibility for the conduct, command and control of all police operations in the country. The forthcoming elections will be the final litmus test of its preparedness to maintain law and order in the country. As the transition progresses, it is important that UNMIT remain steadfast in its support to the PNTL in accordance with the wishes of the Government.

Moving ahead, it is critical that there be necessary legislative and operational frameworks in place for a clear delineation of authority between the military and the police so that they can effectively discharge their responsibilities under the overall command and control of civilian Government. We support the efforts of the Government to seek enhanced regional engagement and to address the development challenges confronting the country. We have noted with satisfaction that overall economic growth, including proceeds from the oil and gas sector, remains robust. The Government's continued focus on infrastructure and capital development would certainly be helpful in ushering rapid socio-economic transition in the country.

As UNMIT moves towards a drawdown by the end of 2012 and the Government assumes full responsibility for various processes, the United Nations system and agencies present in the field must work in a coherent manner. All critical aspects related to the transition, including the downsizing of UNMIT's police component following the elections, the implementation of the Joint Transition Plan and the contours of the future United Nations engagement, must be decided in close consultation with the Government. It is important that the transition be guided and owned by the Timorese Government. We look forward to the Secretary-General's report after the elections.

India attaches great importance to its relations with Timor-Leste, and we have sought to contribute to the country's development by providing expertise and training in areas of our competence and where we see complementarities in their application. India has extended its support to the Government of Timor-Leste, including through assistance for the purchase of equipment and materials related to socio-economic development and in the human resource development sector. We are also partnering with the Government of Timor-Leste under the India-Brazil-South Africa framework.

The progress achieved so far gives us confidence that we are moving in the right direction and that UNMIT is well on path to becoming a success story. We appreciate the efforts of UNMIT, the international community and bilateral partners towards peace, stability and development in the country. We support the Secretary-General's recommendation for the extension of UNMIT's mandate until the end December 2012 at the current authorized levels.

Before I conclude, I would like to express our deep appreciation for the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq, and the dedication and hard work of her team in supporting the Government and people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): It is an honour to have you chairing this meeting, Sir. It is also a great honour for us to have heard the inspiring words of President Ramos-Horta — not only his uplifting account of Timor-Leste's extraordinary journey, but also his reminder of the Council's heavy and noble responsibility. We are sorry for his family bereavement but blessed by his decision nevertheless to keep his engagement with us.

Many thanks also go to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq, for her briefing today, and to all the personnel of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) for their continued contribution to the stabilization of Timor-Leste. Allow me to express our gratitude for all that they have achieved.

I would like to focus on three topics: first, developments in Timor-Leste; secondly, the standard that UNMIT's drawdown sets; and thirdly, the nature of the United Nations presence once the mission has left.

First, this will be a pivotal year for the future of Timor-Leste and its people, who will be asked to elect

a President and a new Parliament. As Timor-Leste works towards these important milestones, we are pleased to note the consolidation of peace and stability in the country, along with its encouraging economic growth and development. The holding of free, fair and accountable elections in March and June is important for the future of Timor-Leste and its democratic credentials. We commend the conduct of political parties that have continued the calls for calm during the elections and for refraining from potentially inflammatory rhetoric.

The resumption of primary policing responsibilities by the Timorese police force last year has been a success. Again we note that there has been no subsequent increase in violence in Timor-Leste as we approach the one-year anniversary of that handover. The national police can be proud of their achievements.

Turning to my second point, 2012 is also an important year in Timor-Leste for United Nations peacekeeping — a year which, we hope, will set a standard for future peacekeeping-peacebuilding transitions. Last year's handover of full policing responsibility was a successful example of that in action. Peace and security have prevailed and Timor-Leste has remained stable.

We commend the development of the Joint Transition Plan by the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT, and hope that it can set a standard for future peacekeeping-peacebuilding transitions, and an example for others to follow, where the United Nations and a host State produce a comprehensive, detailed plan for safeguarding the future stability of a country, supported by the Security Council.

It is important that this process succeed for its own sake, and also to illustrate that the United Nations and Member States can manage a process of transition without jeopardizing stability. However, the development of the Plan should not lead to complacency, and we encourage UNMIT to pursue rigorous scenario analysis and contingency planning, including in advance of elections, in case conditions for drawdown are not met or there is a change in the security situation on the ground.

UNMIT's withdrawal will be a key test for the United Nations in ensuring that its drawdown takes place safely and effectively, while safeguarding stability in Timor-Leste. While we hope and expect that peace and security will prevail in the coming years, we should also take this opportunity to reassure the Government of Timor-Leste that the withdrawal of UNMIT does not mean that the Security Council will turn its back on the country.

This brings me to my third and final point on the post-UNMIT United Nations presence. We sincerely hope that the United Nations and the Government of Timor-Leste will continue the cooperation that they enjoyed in the development of the Joint Transition Plan in order to present a clear proposal for the shape, concept and objectives of the post-UNMIT United Nations presence.

We need a timely decision among the options contained in the Joint Transition Plan, drawing on the input of the relevant United Nations agencies and the international community. We need to ensure that tasks and resources are allocated and configured to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Objectives, priorities and benchmarks to measure progress must be clear, as must the criteria for success and withdrawal. Our goal should be transition to a regular United Nations country team presence as soon as is realistically possible.

In the meantime, the transition from UNMIT to a new form of United Nations presence will represent an important milestone on the path of continued stability and growth in Timor-Leste. We are also grateful to President Ramos-Horta for his very tempting invitation.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal) (*spoke in Portuguese; interpretation provided by the delegation*): I welcome the President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Head of State of one of our brother countries, and the members of the Government of Timor-Leste. I also thank him for his inspiring words and the heartfelt references he made to my country. I also must present my sincere condolences upon his bereavement. I appreciate his presence in these difficult circumstances.

I would also like to especially welcome the delegations of Angola, which will take the floor in its capacity the current Chair of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, and Brazil. I want to thank the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), represented by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and to reiterate Portugal's full support for the Mission's work.

Through Ms. Ameerah Haq, I would also like to praise the personnel of the Mission for their important work.

The year 2012 will undoubtedly be a decisive year for Timor-Leste. The presidential and parliamentary elections will set the pace for the country's political life for the coming term. At the same time, Timor-Leste is preparing to complete the transition from UNMIT's mandate to a future United Nations presence, which must be reassessed and adapted to the new realities in Timor-Leste. Finally, it will be the year in which we will commemorate 10 years of an independent, free and democratic Timor-Leste.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2012/43) rightly highlights the progress that Timor-Leste has achieved during the reporting period. We believe it is clear, from the available data and from the will shown by the Timorese people and institutions, that Timor-Leste is a success story in defending and promoting democracy, human rights and social and economic development. Timor-Leste is truly a successful case in the history of transition from conflict to stability and development. That success is based on the leadership and ownership of the authorities; on the depth of strategic planning for the economy and for the transition beyond peacekeeping; and on the implementation of key national policies and on effective coordination with the United Nations and bilateral partners.

I would now like to underline several elements that will shape success in the coming months. The elections will serve as the defining moment for consolidation of Timorese institutions. We are certain that the elections will take place in a climate of peace and transparency and in accordance with international norms. We are also confident that they will be characterized by statesmanship on the part of the political parties and a sense of duty on the part of the population.

The role to be played by the National Police Force of Timor-Leste (PNTL) during the elections will be one of its greatest challenges since it assumed responsibility for security throughout the country in March 2011. It is therefore a positive sign that the PNTL has been preparing for months in order to ensure public order during the elections and to address any other challenges that may arise during the electoral period. In that context, the support of UNMIT police will be important. I would like to emphasize the admirable work undertaken by UNMIT in the justice and security sectors.

With respect to the transition process, Portugal supports the renewal of UNMIT's mandate until 31 December 2012, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his report. The draft resolution to be adopted tomorrow will form a good basis for the remaining work of UNMIT and the transition itself.

I would like to highlight the excellent cooperation between the Timorese authorities and the United Nations that resulted in the signing of the Joint Transition Plan in September 2011 as the road map for the transfer of responsibilities and capacities from UNMIT to the Timorese authorities. It is a remarkable document within the sphere of United Nations peacekeeping.

The Timorese Government has already expressed interest in the United Nations remaining in the country after UNMIT withdraws. That matter is currently subject to active assessment in Timor-Leste and will certainly undergo deeper analysis in the second half of the year, based on the request of the Timorese Government, assessments by the authorities and the contributions of civil society and United Nations entities.

The relevant political developments throughout 2012, preparations for transition to a new format of United Nations presence in the country, and recognition of the achievements in transitioning to peace and democracy and in building and strengthening institutional capacities fully justify, from Portugal's perspective, a Security Council mission to Timor-Leste. I hereby thank the President for his invitation for such a visit.

Timor-Leste has worked actively to achieve significant social and economic progress. Economic planning in Timor-Leste has been noteworthy, as shown by the adoption of the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan for 2011-2030 and the investment in developing a non-oil economy, which will be essential to ensuring sustainable development. Improvements have also been made in governance and administration.

Portugal remains committed to bilateral cooperation with Timor-Leste, with a particular focus on strategic areas including justice, security and education. I am extremely pleased to note the recent

signing of a cooperation protocol between the Ministries of Education of Portugal and Timor-Leste for the training of 7,000 Timorese teachers at all levels of schooling for a total population of 300,000 students.

The participation of Timorese troops in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, within the Portuguese contingent of that Mission, is a particular example of Timor-Leste's commitment to international peace and security. We salute President Ramos-Horta for his role in the realization of that project.

Timor-Leste still has work ahead in meeting its people's aspirations for economic development and the strengthening of national institutions. The consistent support of the international community remains a crucial element in strengthening capacities and in social and economic development. Portugal is optimistic about this year's decisive developments in Timor-Leste. President Ramos-Horta can count on our bilateral and multilateral support for Timor-Leste in the present and in future.

Mr. DeLaurentis (United States of America): I would like to welcome President José Ramos-Horta to the Council. The United States deeply appreciates his passionate advocacy of human rights and democracy around the world and thanks him for his presence and assessments on the progress Timor-Leste has made.

We also wish to congratulate Timor-Leste on its tenth anniversary of independence. Timor-Leste has taken its rightful place on the global stage, becoming a contributor to United Nations peacekeeping missions and founding and chairing the Group of Seven Plus of post-conflict countries.

I thank Special Representative Haq for today's briefing. Her dedicated leadership and continued commitment to solidifying peace in Timor-Leste are much appreciated. The United Nations and the international community as a whole have worked together since the independence of Timor-Leste and will continue to partner with that young democracy to help it develop and prosper.

Today we have the opportunity to reflect on the advances made in sustaining the stability of Timor-Leste and the country's remaining needs. We must also focus on the progress of the planned withdrawal of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and begin to consider post-UNMIT and United Nations engagement in Timor-Leste.

I would like to address five issues. First, the United States welcomes the transfer of primary policing responsibilities from UNMIT to the Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL). The contribution of all parties to maintaining stability throughout the upcoming election period in Timor-Leste will be critical, and that transfer is a key step in that process. We welcome the progress to professionalize and strengthen the PNTL so that it can carry out its full security responsibilities and command the role UNMIT has played. We note that challenges remain and we encourage the Government of Timor-Leste to define more clearly the respective responsibilities of the PNTL and the Timorese defence forces, especially as we near elections.

As Timor-Leste continues to develop its own national security institutions, clearly defined authorities, accountability and impartiality will be crucial to increasing stability. The United States is committed to supporting the continuing development of the military and police forces, and we have recently increased our bilateral support in that area. Our efforts to advance community policing and sharpen the investigative skills of police and prosecutors are two examples of that commitment.

Secondly, we commend the preparations of the Government of Timor-Leste for the upcoming elections, and praise the efforts of the United Nations and other international partners in supporting the electoral process. The conduct of peaceful, free and fair elections will be a critical milestone in Timor-Leste's history. The success of the electoral process will indicate a further solidification of peace and security throughout the country and signal continued progress towards a peaceful and prosperous future.

We continue to urge all political parties to respect the outcome of the democratic process and to conduct political activities peacefully. We welcome the commitments the political leaders have made so far to respecting a peaceful democratic process.

Thirdly, the development of competent and strong rule of law and governance institutions is critical to the country's long-term success. We are encouraged by the Government's progress in promoting anti-corruption and transparency initiatives, and underscore the importance of strengthening those institutions. We also encourage the resolution of outstanding truth and reconciliation issues from the period 1975-1999,

including the establishment of a memory institute or other institutional mechanism. We also hope that the Serious Crimes Investigation Team will be able to complete its important work within its mandate. We urge the Timor-Leste authorities to pursue full and credible accountability for all crimes and abuses, including, among others, those arising from the 2006 crisis, in order to deliver justice and build trust in the institutions of justice.

Fourthly, I want to recognize the truly impressive level of collaboration that has taken place between UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste in developing a transition plan for UNMIT's withdrawal by the end of 2012. We encourage both parties to continue to focus their work on transition planning, even as the electoral cycle begins. We encourage UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste to continue to engage international partners to ensure that any capability gaps are quickly identified and filled.

Finally, with UNMIT's expected withdrawal approaching, we must think about the future engagement of the United Nations and the Security Council in Timor-Leste. Discussions on the role of the United Nations following UNMIT's departure will need to include the Government of Timor-Leste and the international community. We strongly believe that the elections themselves should not be an exit strategy, but rather that UNMIT's transition should be determined by the progress of events on the ground. We believe that continued United Nations engagement could play a constructive role in addressing issues related to security, human rights, justice, economic development, governance and accountability.

In closing, the United States would like to once again commend the leadership and dedication of Special Representative Haq, the peacekeepers of UNMIT for their work and contributions, the international community for its multilateral and bilateral support to Timor-Leste, and the Timorese themselves for their continued dedication to peace and security in Timor-Leste.

Mr. Pankin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to welcome the participation of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, in this meeting. We would also like to express our condolences on his recent loss and his determination to attend this Security Council meeting in person despite the sad circumstances. We are also grateful to Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ms. Ameerah Haq for her briefing on the work of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I will be brief.

We are pleased at how the situation is developing in that country. The internal political trends are positive. That is particularly important in the light of this year's upcoming presidential and parliamentary elections. We hope that they will take place in a peaceful environment and will affirm the achievements of the people of Timor-Leste in national reconciliation.

The security situation is also stable. We commend the Mission's efforts to support Timor-Leste by enhancing the security sector, in particular the national police. We hope that, during the electoral period, the Mission will serve only as a support to the national authorities, which will take full control of the situation. We are pleased to note that the Government of Timor-Leste has assumed full responsibility for the capacity-building of the national police and that it has taken a number of specific steps ahead of the elections, including improved logistical and technical support of the law enforcement forces.

The coming spring and summer will be a kind of graduation test for the Mission. Following that, a final decision on the modalities for the drawdown of the Mission will be taken. We hope that everything will be in line with the ongoing Joint Transition Plan of the Government of Timor-Leste and the Mission and the timeline set out by the Secretary-General in his previous report to the Security Council (S/2011/641). No less important in the second half of this year will be the issue of the continuing United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, the nature and extent of which should be decided in consultation with the Government of Timor-Leste, the Mission and other United Nations bodies.

In the period following the Mission's withdrawal, in the light of the recent conflict, ongoing peacebuilding support will be needed. We believe that the United Nations should continue to provide appropriate support to the people of Timor-Leste through its specialized programmes and funds, including in the social and economic areas. Following the Mission's withdrawal, it should not be felt that the international presence is fleeing the country. In that regard, we welcome the efforts of those donor countries that have provided bilateral support to Timor-Leste during this period.

We are pleased to see that the international community's efforts to ensure conflict settlement and post-conflict peacebuilding are having positive results. The situation in Timor-Leste is a very good example of that. We hope that by this autumn we will be talking about the situation in Timor-Leste only positively, without any reservations whatsoever.

Finally, we support the adoption of the draft resolution extending the mandate of the Mission until the end of 2012. We wish the Government of Timor-Leste and the Mission success in meeting the various challenges still facing them.

Mr. Bonne (France) (*spoke in French*): I, too, would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her briefing. Allow me also, above all, to welcome the presence among us of President Ramos-Horta in difficult family circumstances.

I associate myself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

Timor-Leste is entering a delicate electoral phase. We understand that, and it will be up to the Timorese themselves to manage this period. However, we have grounds for optimism. The situation is stable and everything leads us to believe that the progress noted in the economic, institutional and social fields will continue. The transfer of responsibility for security to the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste is taking place under good conditions with no increase in crime.

However, history should make us cautious. The United Nations and other international actors will therefore help the Timor-Leste authorities in the preparation of the presidential and legislative elections, and, of course, stand ready if needed. Timor-Leste is a United Nations success story that shows the ability of our Organization to accompany a country towards peace and stability. Once again, we wish to commend the remarkable work of the Special Representative and all staff of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We also salute the political maturity shown by the Timorese political class throughout that process. We also congratulate President Ramos-Horta on his country's participation in a United Nations peacekeeping operation, which promotes Timor-Leste from the rank of beneficiary of United Nations peacekeeping assistance to that of contributor to peacekeeping.

We supported the new deal for engagement in fragile States, adopted in Busan last December. That initiative is ambitious in seeking to change the deal between fragile countries and development partners in a spirit of mutual responsibility. On that occasion we were able to assess the dynamic role played by President Ramos-Horta and the diplomacy of his country within the Group of Seven Plus, and we appreciated it.

The departure of UNMIT does not mean that the United Nations is losing interest in Timor-Leste. On the contrary, the international community is committed for the long term. The European Union will therefore continue its work for the country's development and stability. French bilateral assistance will also continue in line with existing bilateral aid and the priorities set out in the Strategic Development Plan adopted by the Timorese authorities.

We hope that the weeks following the elections will be an opportunity for the new Government, in cooperation with the United Nations and partner countries, to define the kind of presence that our Organization will keep in place after UNMIT's departure. We also hope that the coming months will make it possible to affirm the recent experience of Timor-Leste as a good example of peacebuilding operations.

Mr. Bouchaara (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Republic of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his presentation. I would also like to offer him our most sincere condolences following the passing of a dear close relative. I would also like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), for her detailed briefing on the most recent developments in Timor-Leste since the previous meeting last November (see S/PV. 6664).

My country welcomes the fact that the situation in Timor-Leste remained calm in the period covered by the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/43). At this crucial moment in its history, Timor-Leste must pursue the stabilization and pacification process in the country. This stability was made possible by the determination of the national authorities to preserve its achievements and by the efforts of the international

community through UNMIT and the presence on the ground of the multinational security force.

In this context, we welcome the considerable efforts made by the Timor-Leste authorities, the Polícia National de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and the army, to ensure security. Indeed, the implementation of the PNTL-UNMIT police Joint Development Plan and the institutional capacity-building of the Timor-Leste army have significantly contributed to stabilizing the country. Moreover, the unprecedented participation of Timorese soldiers in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan attests to the professionalism of the Timor-Leste army and to the commitment of the Government to contributing to achieving the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations.

In terms of the rule of law, actions taken to protect children, investigations into crimes against humanity and combating discrimination against women are all of considerable significance. The reforms undertaken by the Timorese authorities in the judicial sector have also facilitated access to justice, reduced the backlog of criminal cases, and improved prison infrastructure. These reforms also have facilitated the adoption, in the framework of enhancing democratic governance, of legal texts concerning the fight against corruption, money-laundering and the financing of terrorism.

Timor-Leste is on the eve of important presidential and legislative elections that will represent a turning point by leading to the establishment of a new Government. In this regard, all stakeholders — be they political parties or members of civil society, and particularly women and young people — must be committed to a satisfactory electoral process, which is so important for the future of Timor-Leste. At the same time, as noted by the President of the Republic, the necessary support of the international community must continue in order to support the Timorese reforms, the reintegration of ex-combatants and the economic and social development of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to welcome the presence at this meeting of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his statement. We are also grateful to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Ameerah Haq, for her briefing and presentation of the Secretary-General's report (S/2010/43) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

Azerbaijan welcomes further improvements in many aspects of the political and security situation in Timor-Leste. We note the progress made in achieving stability, economic growth and socio-economic development in the country, and commend the Government of Timor-Leste for its efforts to this end.

As the Secretary-General points out in his report, steady progress has been made in the preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections this year. Important steps have been taken to complete the legal framework for the upcoming elections. At the same time, it is obvious that the security situation and stability on the ground will remain key issues in the period leading up to the elections. It is essential that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General continue to play her good offices role vis-à-vis all parties to ensure a peaceful and credible political process.

We note that the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) has made operational planning for the elections a key priority, and that UNMIT police will continue to stand ready to provide support to the PNTL, if required and requested, during the electoral period and beyon It is encouraging to note that, since the PNTL assumed full responsibility for law enforcement in March 2011, the security situation in the country has continued to be stable and calm, and the reported crime rate has remained low. It is critical to further strengthen the institutional development of the PNTL and support the effective implementation of the Joint Development Plan.

Azerbaijan welcomes the progress achieved in the areas of rule of law, justice and human rights in Timor-Leste and, in this regard, encourages all stakeholders to continue their cooperation aimed at strengthening the capacity of national institutions. We commend the Government for its positive and constructive response following the review of its national report through the Human Rights Council's Periodic Review Mechanism. We also are of the view that further efforts towards establishing accountability for serious criminal offences of the past would have a positive impact on long-term peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

Against the background of many challenges, the country still needs the continued assistance of bilateral and multilateral partners in order to fully realize its

potential for equitable and inclusive sustainable growth. We welcome the Dili Development Pact, agreed between the Government of Timor-Leste and the donor community in July 2011, and consider it essential that UNMIT continue to cooperate and coordinate with the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, as well as all relevant partners, to support the Government of Timor-Leste.

Azerbaijan commends UNMIT and the United Nations country team, under the leadership of Special Representative Ameerah Haq, for their continued efforts in helping the people of Timor-Leste to advance peace, stability and development. We support the extension of the UNMIT mandate until the end of this year, and believe that it will contribute to facilitating the transition process. The implementation of the Joint Transition Plan will be an important task for all stakeholders in the period ahead and, together with the needs and preferences of the Government, will definitely influence the final decision on the United Nations presence and role in Timor-Leste after UNMIT completes its mandate at the end of 2012.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin by welcoming the President of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta. His serene but firm defence of human rights — which, among other things, earned him the Nobel Peace Prize — have been a source of inspiration to many of us.

Similarly, we appreciate the information provided by Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). We commend her leadership and efforts in support of that country.

The year 2012 is very important, as it marks the tenth anniversary of the restoration of Timor-Leste's independence. The achievements made in that brief time deserve recognition, and we are glad to share this historic moment with that country. We congratulate President Ramos-Horta on his leadership and for the progress made in his country. We also thank bilateral donors and the international security forces for their continuing commitment to peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

We are aware that the consolidation of democracy and the building of a system of governance are a long-term process. Although there are many challenges to overcome, the political, economic and security situation in Timor-Leste bears witness to the goodwill and resilience of the Timorese. The Security Council is following closely the electoral process, and it is encouraging that so far steady progress has been made, which will ensure a peaceful and credible political process.

We know that the support of the international community will still be needed after UNMIT's withdrawal, particularly to consolidate Timor-Leste institutions that are still in the process of formation, such as the police, a sector in which the United Nations has heavily invested. In that regard, we welcome the Joint Transition Plan signed by the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT. Its effective implementation will ensure a smooth transition.

We are encouraged by Timor-Leste's increasing incorporation into the international community. An example is its efforts to join the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which we hope will be successful. This will undoubtedly be a platform that will benefit not only the Timorese but also the international community as a whole.

Guatemala believes that the continued presence of the United Nations after the withdrawal of UNMIT must be consistent with the situation on the ground and respect the priorities of the Government to be elected in the coming months.

Timor-Leste is endowed with sufficient natural resources. The proper management of those resources will be essential to its sustainable development. Greater investment will be required in areas including education, youth employment, health and agriculture. We echo the call made by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haq, who urged national institutions to resolutely combat corruption and to send a clear message that such practices will not be tolerated.

We would like to acknowledge the important role that the United Nations has played in Timor-Leste since 1999. The United Nations has become a better institution, as a result not only of the work done there, but also of the lessons learned from that country. Its evolution has thus been a shared success.

In that same vein, I wish also to recall the memory of the late Sergio Vieira de Mello, one of the pioneers of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste.

Allow me to conclude by thanking President José Ramos-Horta for his encouraging presentation. It is true that Timor-Leste is a Security Council success story, but, more important, it is a success story for the Government and the people of Timor-Leste.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me at the outset to welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and to congratulate him on the major progress that has been made under his leadership towards the consolidation of democracy in his country. I should also like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), for her detailed and clear briefing on recent developments in that country. We underscore her dedication and commitment, as well as that demonstrated by all the staff of UNMIT. I should like to reiterate our support for her efforts to promote peace, stability and development in Timor-Leste.

My delegation would like to highlight the important progress that has been made towards political consolidation, improved security and stability in Timor-Leste. We also commend the commitment shown by the authorities, civil society, the security forces and the United Nations to foster national dialogue and promote broad participation in democratic processes.

We wish to highlight the significant progress made in preparing for the 2012 elections, particularly the approval by the National Electoral Commission of subsidiary electoral legislation, the outcome of the voter registration process and the initiatives aimed at encouraging greater participation by women and young people in the electoral process. The holding of free, transparent and peaceful elections would be a milestone for Timor-Leste and would also represent a major test for the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and its capacity to respond to security problems.

We believe that UNMIT police should continue to provide the necessary operational support during and after the electoral period. We agree with you, Mr. President, that with more than 20 political parties, this is not an easy process to manage.

With regard to the logistical capacity-building of the Timor-Leste police, we would highlight the commitment made by the Prime Minister in the parliamentary debate held on the 2012 State budget. Nevertheless, we believe that in order to ensure a sufficiency of funds, the necessary resources must be made be available in a timely manner, so as to ensure that the national police has a necessary and adequate logistical capacity before UNMIT's withdrawal.

We believe that the full implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation and the Commission of Truth and Friendship will contribute to the consolidation of peace and stability in Timor-Leste. We recommend that there should be a prompt resumption of the parliamentary debate on draft laws on indemnification and the establishment of the institutions that will take over from the two Commissions.

My delegation is pleased to see the progress achieved by the Government in terms of economic growth, in particular with respect to poverty reduction and improved human development indicators. But efforts still need to be made to promote inclusive, fair and sustainable growth. It is essential that the necessary resources be allocated to sectors such as rural development, health, nutrition, education and job creation.

We would also highlight the activities carried out by the Government of Timor-Leste to enhance the effectiveness and institutional capacities of the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Civil Service Commission. We welcome the adoption of a law on preventing and combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. We believe that Timor-Leste should have the legislation, institutions, machinery and standards necessary to ensure the stability, transparency and effectiveness of the public administration in the longer term.

The effective implementation of the Joint Transition Plan must be a major priority for the Government and all stakeholders. Periodic reviews must be undertaken that ensure the operational capacity and response of UNMIT on the ground. As the Secretary-General states in his report (S/2012/43), achieving the Plan's objectives will influence the size, composition and nature of the United Nations participation in Timor-Leste following the withdrawal of UNMIT.

Given that in the coming months UNMIT's support will continue to be necessary for institutional development and the building of the operational

capacities of the national police, and with respect to assistance with the elections, Colombia recommends that the mandate of UNMIT be extended until 31 December 2012.

Mr. Yang Tao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I welcome the presence here today of President José Ramos-Horta. His briefing was very encouraging. I also thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haq for her briefing and her work.

Since the Council's review of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) late last year, the situation in Timor-Leste has achieved further positive progress. At present, the overall situation in the country remains stable. State institutions are working normally and police capacity-building has been especially successful. Economic and social development is advancing steadily, with good prospects for development. All of this is the result of the unremitting efforts of the Government and people of Timor-Leste, as well as of the critical, vigorous support of the international community and the United Nations over the past many years.

Timor-Leste will hold presidential and parliamentary elections this year, and UNMIT's peacekeeping activities will come to an end. This will be a crucial year for Timor-Leste's development. As to the next phase of priority work for the international community, I should like to make the following proposals.

First, we must work tirelessly to support the Government of Timor-Leste in its capacity-building. The Government and people of Timor-Leste, under the leadership of President Ramos-Horta, have energetically pursued capacity-building for many years and striven to take control of the fate and future of their country, for which China expresses its appreciation. The development and long-term security of Timor-Leste will ultimately depend on the efforts of its Government and people. China hopes that the international community will further enhance its support to the capacity-building efforts of the Government of Timor-Leste, especially in the crucial areas of institution-building, security, justice, the economy, education, health and women's issues. In this process, the opinions of the Government and people of Timor-Leste should be taken into account and their leadership respected.

Secondly, priority efforts must be made to ensure the successful holding of the presidential and parliamentary elections in Timor-Leste. The upcoming elections are a major event in the country's political life and are of particular significance. China hopes that the international community and the Government of Timor-Leste will join forces to ensure orderly and calm presidential and parliamentary elections. We support UNMIT in its ongoing close coordination with the Government of Timor-Leste as it provides necessary support and plays a constructive role.

Thirdly, it is essential to ensure a stable and smooth transition process. Ever since its establishment, UNMIT has made a positive contribution to the stability and development of Timor-Leste. China supports the extension of the Mission's mandate and the Joint Transition Plan prepared by UNMIT and the Government of Timor-Leste. We also support the Secretary-General's proposal for a phased drawdown of UNMIT. We hope that the parties concerned will prepare further arrangements to improve the transition process and help conclude UNMIT's mandate in a stable and orderly manner with a view to ensuring Timor-Leste's stability and full capacity to achieve sustainable development. UNMIT will thereby become a success story in the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations.

As to the future United Nations presence in Timor-Leste, China hopes that the Secretariat will enjoy close cooperation with the Government and fully heed and respect its opinion. We expect the Secretariat and the Secretary-General to offer further proposals to the Council in that respect. As a developing country, China has always actively sought out friendly and mutually beneficial cooperation with Timor-Leste. Going forward, we will continue to provide our assistance and support to Timor-Leste within our capacities.

Mr. Berger (Germany): My delegation would like to convey a particularly warm welcome to President Ramos-Horta. We also wish to congratulate him on the upcoming anniversary of Timor-Leste's independence. His statement shows the commitment with which both the Timorese people and the Government are working towards shaping a peaceful and prosperous future for their country.

I would like to join previous speakers in thanking Special Representative of the Secretary-General Haq

for her briefing and her leadership. As I have stated in the Council before, Germany commends the successful work of the United Nations team, both in Timor-Leste and in New York, in support of the Timorese people.

Let me also thank the delegation of South Africa for taking the lead in this dossier. Germany is fully supportive of the draft resolution to extend the mandate of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) one final time until the end of this year. It is our intention to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

My country aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union later in this debate.

Germany continues to be fully confident that the people of Timor-Leste, with the support of the United Nations and many international partners, remain on the right track. Today's briefings clearly underpin our optimism. We welcome the continued overall progress in the country, among other things with regard to the consolidation of the substantial institutional achievements made, the generally calm security environment, and the preparations for the upcoming electoral cycle. In the latter context, Germany welcomes the invitation by the Government of Timor-Leste to the European Union to send an election observation mission. In light of this progress, my delegation feels assured that the successful completion of another electoral cycle this year will mark the right moment for initiating the withdrawal of UNMIT.

At this stage, Germany encourages maximum attention to a smooth and sustainable transition from UNMIT to the Timorese Government, the new United Nations presence or other bilateral partners, and lauds the respective efforts made so far. It is crucial that we develop an understanding of what we are transitioning into. Here, my delegation considers it very helpful that a national consensus is taking shape on the nature of the future, post-UNMIT United Nations support in the country. We encourage the next Government to make a timely decision on the international support requested.

With regard to the remaining volatilities, Germany is of the view that the right lessons have to be drawn from the past. Yet, we underline the medium-term requirements for further consolidation in the areas of justice, governance, human rights and civilian capacity-building, as was also mentioned by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. We also support our Timorese partners in their expectation to maintain a close link to the Council for as long as volatilities remain. As became apparent in this morning's membership consultations, many of those requirements coincide with the United Nations strategic focus and comparative advantages.

At this stage, I would like to express once again the appreciation of my Government for the valuable contributions made by UNMIT and commend the dedication and service of its staff. Let me conclude by wishing President Ramos-Horta and his compatriots all the best for this very important year. Germany highly values its close friendship with Timor-Leste and will continue to stand by Timor-Leste during transition and thereafter.

Mr. Tarar (Pakistan): I thank you, Mr. President, for holding this debate on Timor-Leste. We join other Council members in welcoming His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, to the Security Council. I would also like to offer heartfelt condolences upon the demise of his brother-in-law. We also thank him for inviting the Council to visit Timor-Leste.

We would also like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for her comprehensive briefing.

The year 2012 marks the tenth anniversary of the restoration of independence of Timor-Leste. During this period, the country has made remarkable progress overall and will soon transition to being a fully independent and sovereign nation. Pakistan has made significant contribution to this transition. As a contributor to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor and the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) over the past 10 years, Pakistan considers itself a stakeholder in the peace and stability of that country. Currently, there are 127 Pakistani police personnel serving in UNMIT. One of them, Ms. Shahzadi Gulfam, was awarded the 2011 International Female Police Peacekeeper Award in recognition of her outstanding performance as the team leader of the Vulnerable Persons Unit in Dili. Pakistan is fully committed to contributing to the completion of the mandated tasks during UNMIT's remaining deployment period, in what should be the Mission's last extension. I would like to touch upon four issues.

First, the successful holding of presidential and legislative elections will be a major milestone in the transition in Timor-Leste and a key test of the viability of its State institutions. We are pleased to note from the Secretary-General's report (S/2012/43) that steady progress has been made in the preparations for the elections. We commend the efforts of President José Ramos-Horta to hold a dialogue among national leaders to create a positive atmosphere for the elections. It would be important to hold peaceful elections in accordance with the Constitution of the country. UNMIT and the bilateral partners of Timor-Leste should extend maximum support for the attainment of that objective. The maintenance of law and order before and during the elections will be critical. The operational and logistical gaps faced by the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL), as identified in the Secretary-General's report, must therefore be filled in a timely manner.

Secondly, the implementation of the Joint Transition Plan, signed between the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT on 19 September, will be critical to the smooth transition of the Mission and the continued development of the country. In accordance with the Plan, the transfer of UNMIT functions and assets to the Timorese Government must take place in a systematic and coordinated manner, while ensuring that national authorities have the required capabilities to take over functions that are being transferred to them. There is a need to maintain momentum in that exercise, even as the country prepares to hold the elections. We look forward to the determination of the United Nations post-UNMIT engagement in Timor-Leste, from among one of the four options identified in the Plan and based on close consultations with the Timorese authorities. The international community must continue to assist the country for the duration of the Transition Plan.

Thirdly, the presence of effective security forces is critical for maintaining the stability of the country. We note with satisfaction that the security situation in the country has remained stable following the transfer of policing responsibilities to the PNTL. UNMIT must continue to support the PNTL in its capacity-building in accordance with the PNTL-UNMIT Police Joint Development Plan. The PNTL continues to face a shortage of equipment and resources. In that regard, we commend the steps taken by the Government to increase the budgetary allocation for bridging the capacity gaps faced by the PNTL. The bilateral partners of Timor-Leste must also assist the country in addressing those gaps through the provision of resources and expertise. Simultaneously, the authorities must take steps to build and consolidate judicial authorities and institutions in order to ensure accountability and prevent impunity.

Fourthly, we are encouraged by the economic performance of Timor-Leste. As underscored in the Secretary-General's report, the Government must make further efforts to promote inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth in the country. The international community has played its part in helping the people of Timor-Leste. It is now up to the Timorese leadership to seize the opportunity and build a better future for the country.

Finally, we would like to commend the efforts of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq and her team in helping make UNMIT a success story for the United Nations. Let me once again assure the Council of Pakistan's support to that endeavour.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Togo.

I would like to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq for her clear introduction of the report (S/2012/43) of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). I also welcome the presence in the Security Council of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, who has honoured our debate today with his presence in spite of the loss of a member of his family.

In accordance with its mandate, UNMIT is to support the Government and the country's institutions with a view to consolidate stability, promote a culture of democratic governance and facilitate political dialogue among Timorese stakeholders in their efforts to begin a process of national reconciliation and to promote social cohesion.

To that end, on 1 December 2006, UNMIT concluded an agreement with the Government on the restoration and maintenance of security in Timor-Lest and on assistance for the reform, restructuring and strengthening of the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) and the Ministry of the Interior. Similarly, in

resolution 1969 (2011), of 24 February 2011, the Security Council tasked UNMIT with supporting, within the scope of its mandate, the organization of legislative and presidential elections scheduled for this year. Togo welcomes the fact that the United Nations is effectively helping the Government of Timor-Leste in both the electoral process and in bolstering the participation of women and young people in political life. It is our hope that, with the assistance of UNMIT, the parliamentary democracy that is developing in the country will be strengthened following the upcoming elections. In that regard, the dialogue among national leaders co-hosted by President Ramos-Horta and the Bishop of Baucau should be pursued.

With regard to democratic governance, we duly appreciate the campaign that has been launched to combat corruption and clean up public finances in Timor-Leste. In that regard, my country commends Parliament's adoption of the law aimed at combating and preventing money laundering and the financing of terrorism.

On the security front, the UNMIT police contingent has continued to provide the PNTL with operational support in various areas, as well as support for security agencies, institutional capacity-building and mentoring for border guard units, including carrying out joint patrols.

At the same time, UNMIT is working to promote human rights and the administration of justice, in particular through a national awareness-raising campaign with regard to protecting children. UNMIT also supports the national priorities programme, socio-economic development and humanitarian assistance.

Lastly, UNMIT, the Government and other stakeholders have been working to implement the transition process, in line with the Transition Plan signed on 19 December 2011 by the President, the Prime Minister and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

We welcome all those efforts, which are perfectly in line with the goals of promoting peace and security in Timor-Leste. Nevertheless, while the overall current situation in Timor-Leste may be calm, we must not lose sight of local tensions, especially between individuals and martial arts groups. We hope that the decision of the Timorese Government to suspend the activities of those groups for a year will contribute to the organization of legislative and presidential elections without violence in the country.

On the legal front, we saw that despite the development of a legal framework and a national plan of action against gender-based violence, there has been no progress in the situation with regard to the legal prosecution of the perpetrators of serious crimes and grave violations of human rights committed during the 2006 crisis.

We are also of the view that additional efforts should be devoted to promoting fair and lasting socio-economic improvement. Togo calls on Timor-Leste's development partners to continue to support the country in that regard.

The efforts of the United Nations system as a whole are significant. However, major challenges remain. For that reason, it is important for UNMIT to pursue its efforts in the priority areas of its mandate, such as institutional development, capacity-building for the national police and electoral assistance. It is also essential to ensure the efficient implementation of the Joint Development Plan of the national police and the United Nations police. The extension of UNMIT's mandate is therefore appropriate and I call on the Security Council to consider the essential stakes in making a decision on this issue.

In closing, I would like to congratulate the troop- and police-contributing countries to UNMIT on their efforts to ensure peace and stability in Timor-Leste. The Security Council and the United Nations as a whole are always ready to do what is necessary to achieve this objective, which my country is very pleased to note.

I resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Angola.

Mr. Da Cruz (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I take the floor on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP): Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste and my own country, Angola, which is the current Chair of the Community.

At the outset, I would like to welcome the participation in this meeting of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste. I also

take this opportunity to welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/43) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

It is with great pleasure that we note the progress made by Timor-Leste in recent times and how the report of the Secretary-General does justice to it. Timor-Leste is one scenario where cooperation within the CPLP has proven very important for all Member States, and we sincerely hope that the result of our joint efforts will benefit the Timorese nation.

The installation of the permanent representation of the CPLP in Dili is progressing thanks to the invaluable support of the Timorese authorities. Moreover, the CPLP strategic plan for Timor-Leste should soon be in place, especially in the area of the promotion and dissemination of the Portuguese language. Thus, the reformulation of the mandate of the permanent representation that was agreed at the summit in Luanda, with a strong cultural component and support for the use of the Portuguese language in Timor-Leste, in addition to the political component, is of added importance.

Timor-Leste's commitment to forging a strong relationship with the CPLP has also been demonstrated by its performance as the current President of the CPLP Parliamentary Assembly and the good results achieved at its third session, held in Dili in September 2011. The CPLP has confidence in the country's political stability, which has been reflected in the preparation of political parties for an electoral contest and in the holding of each party's congress in a peaceful environment. The CPLP also supports the initiatives of the Government concerning stabilization and reconciliation through institutional dialogue.

The States members of the CPLP will remain committed to continuing the excellent cooperation developed with Timor-Leste to date in order to strengthen its stability, consolidate its institutions and grow its economy. This process also contributes to the growing assertion of the country in its region, which is beneficial to the involvement of the CPLP in South-East Asia and the Pacific.

Timor-Leste's successful application for membership in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the appointment of a working group to consider the process of accession attest to the country's progress in recent years. We are further pleased to see Timor-Leste taking its first steps as a country that contributes to peace and security in the world with the integration of soldiers of the Falintil-Forças Armadas de Defesa de Timor-Leste (F-FDTL) in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon in Lebanon and in the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, as well as a military observer in South Sudan.

In other areas, Timor-Leste will certainly be an example to follow in ensuring a more peaceful and more secure world. I note the lessons learned and shared by Timor-Leste with regard to the peaceful demobilization of the veterans of the liberation struggle, the new military recruits, the legislation concerning F-FDTL, and the professionalization of the defence forces of Timor-Leste, which should pride themselves for serving the people and democracy of their country.

The year 2012 is of great importance to the consolidation of the Timorese democracy, and the Community I represent here reaffirms its confidence in the maturity of the Timorese people and leaders as they embark on the political steps that lie ahead. We are certain that the next presidential and legislative elections will take place in an environment of tranquillity and security, reflecting the positive developments of recent years in the country.

The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries maintains its solidarity with Timor-Leste and has confidence in the capacity of the Timorese leaders and people to maintain peace and stability, which are essential to the economic and social development that can make Timor-Leste a factor for increased stability and security in the region.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I welcome His Excellency President José Ramos-Horta and express Brazil's pleasure at seeing him participate in this meeting of the Security Council. I would also like to thank Special Representative Ameerah Haq for her briefing and congratulate her on her efforts in support of Timor-Leste. Brazil is also grateful for the work of South Africa as the new Coordinator of the Core Group for Timor-Leste.

The upcoming elections in Timor-Leste will be a particularly significant moment in the history of the

country. They will mark the third democratic elections carried out by the Timorese people, and will occur during the symbolically important celebration of the tenth anniversary of Timorese independence. More importantly, the elections and the newly elected Government's assumption of authority will be cornerstones for the definition of the future United Nations presence in Timor-Leste.

Brazil trusts that the elections will take place successfully. The fluid and democratic dialogue between the Government and the opposition has been a sign of the political maturity of the Timorese people and institutions. We also congratulate the Timorese authorities on the measures taken to prepare for the elections. Brazil shares the Secretary-General's satisfaction with the emphasis placed by the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) on operational planning for the electoral months with the assistance of United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

We are convinced that the stability Timor-Leste has achieved will be carefully maintained. We acknowledge that, since reassuming primary responsibilities for policing almost a year ago, the PNTL has demonstrated its capacity to fully carry out the task. The work of UNMIT with the PNTL, including through the implementation of the Joint Development Plan, has been of great importance. We expect the Mission to continue assisting the National Police until the final withdrawal of UNMIT's police component.

The groundbreaking initiative of the Joint Transition Plan sets a useful example of the importance of the dialogue between the host country and the United Nations to allow for the efficient transfer of responsibilities to the Government after the departure of a United Nations mission. As a member of the Core Group for Timor-Leste, Brazil joins the consensual support for the extension of UNMIT's mandate until the end of the year and looks forward to the Secretary-General's assessment on the political and security situation in Timor-Leste. It is crucial that the gradual drawdown of UNMIT take into account the wishes of the Government of Timor-Leste, the conditions on the ground and the successful completion of the electoral process.

As outlined in the Joint Transition Plan, the projects set forth by the Timorese, with the help of UNMIT, have significantly contributed to stability in the security sector, the strengthening of institutions and socio-economic development. We are fully confident that Timor-Leste will continue along that positive path. Brazil will continue to support the Government of Timor-Leste through bilateral and trilateral cooperation projects in areas such as agriculture, education, justice and security.

Timor-Leste has had an exemplary trajectory. As we pointed out during the Council's debate in November of last year (see S/PV.6664), it is telling that the challenges that the country faces now are not those of violent conflict but rather of socio-economic development and institutional consolidation — in other words, of fulfilling the country's great potential.

Timor-Leste's bid for accession to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and its contribution to the United Nations missions in Lebanon and South Sudan are a sign of the country's intention to play its part in contributing to the cause of a more peaceful and prosperous world. UNMIT's role has been fundamental and will continue to be so until its departure. We congratulate the Government of Timor-Leste and UNMIT for their momentous achievements.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the deputy head of the delegation of the European Union.

Mr. Vrailas: Thank you, Mr. President, for giving the floor to the European Union (EU).

The acceding country Croatia, the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Iceland, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Serbia, and the European Free Trade Association country Norway, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

First and foremost, I would like to congratulate President Ramos-Horta and the Government of Timor-Leste on the continued progress as manifestly spelled out in the Secretary-General's report before us (S/2012/43). The Government's leadership in fostering peace, unity and development continues to bear fruit.

I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ameerah Haq for her briefing. Her team's efforts towards stabilization and recovery

deserve much praise. We also commend the thorough way in which the team is preparing for the departure of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and the necessary transition of the work of the international community.

Over the years, Timor-Leste has accomplished impressive progress in terms of stability, democracy, the rule of law, human rights and economic growth. It has demonstrated to the international community its resolve to stay the course, with this year's elections as yet another important milestone. The gradual downsizing and proposed ultimate withdrawal of UNMIT by the end of this election year are logical steps on that path.

We share the Secretary-General's positive appraisal of the steady progress in preparing the presidential and parliamentary elections. Particularly encouraging is the constructive and responsible manner in which political leaders, security forces and civil society have been interacting, at the national and local levels, to ensure a safe and responsible electoral process, consistent with previous occasions. In view of the coming electoral period and the challenges created thereby, continued close cooperation between the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste and the United Nations police, as mutually agreed, remains important.

Next week an EU election exploratory mission will visit Timor-Leste to assess the merit and feasibility of an EU election observation mission for the upcoming parliamentary elections. A decision on the deployment of such a mission will be taken in the immediate weeks thereafter.

In addition to consolidating democracy, reconciliation remains an important precondition for Timor-Leste's long-term stability. We call on the National Parliament to resume discussions on the two draft laws on the memorial institute and reparations, and on the implementation of the recommendations of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

Another element that in our view requires continued attention is security sector reform. Although considerable progress has been achieved as regards higher standards of professionalism and discipline, accountability mechanisms and the integrity of the security forces, we encourage Timor-Leste to continue and to consolidate its efforts.

Turning to the post-UNMIT landscape, we believe that the necessary decisions need to be taken in coordination between the Timorese Government and the United Nations. Whichever setup is decided upon, from a European perspective it should be designed to ensure a smooth transition, without any significant gaps, and to preserve the considerable achievements of UNMIT's activities to date. We also believe that appropriate follow-up needs to be ensured of UNMIT's important work on, among other things, justice, the rule of law and human rights, including through a continuation of support to the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice. In that context, the creation of a local office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights could also be an option worth exploring.

We have stood by Timor-Leste's side through its challenging times and remain committed to doing so in the future. As the focus is shifting from security and stability to development issues, the international community should remain strongly engaged. With the adoption of the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan, the implementation of the new deal for engagement in fragile States and the continuous efforts of development partners, we are confident that Timor-Leste will continue to be a successful example in terms of State-building and socio-economic development.

In conclusion, we fully support the extension of the Mission's mandate until 31 December 2012 and we look forward to the next Secretary-General's report assessing the elections and providing recommendations on the way forward to the successful completion of UNMIT's mandate and the eventual establishment of a post-UNMIT United Nations presence in Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this significant meeting and for inviting Australia to participate. I especially want to welcome President Ramos-Horta's presence today, despite his difficult family circumstances, and to say how much his personal contribution to the emergence of an independent and — as we have heard and know — increasingly vibrant Timor-Leste is admired in Australia. I can assure him and all the citizens of Timor-Leste that for my own country Timor-Leste will never be just a corner of the world. I also thank Special Representative Ameerah Haq for her report and for all her work and that of her team.

As we know, 2012 will be an historic and pivotal year for Timor-Leste, with elections and its tenth anniversary on 20 May. Timor-Leste has made remarkable progress in recent years, including an impressive growth rate of 10 per cent in its gross domestic product expected this year, a strong petroleum fund underpinning the prospects of long-term and sustainable economic development, and important efforts to build the country's infrastructure.

We recognize, of course, that the challenge of improving standards of health and education in particular is ongoing, as is building the institutions that underpin democracy. Nonetheless, we share an optimistic view of Timor-Leste's future as the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) prepares to wind down at the end of the year.

My own country supports the renewal of UNMIT's mandate until the end of 2012. That will ensure UNMIT support at the political level, as well as support from the United Nations police throughout the full election cycle, including after the formation of a new Government. It will be important for decisions on the pace of the withdrawal of UNMIT staff following the mid-year parliamentary elections to take full account of the conditions on the ground, as well as of the wishes of the Government of Timor-Leste.

The elections, as we know, will be a test for the institutions and people of Timor-Leste, but Australia has confidence in the electoral authorities' capacity to conduct effective elections. We know that a great deal of preparatory work with the support of the United Nations police and the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) provided by New Zealand and Australia are under way to secure election security. That preparation is obviously critical. The ISF, of course, stands ready to provide support to Timorese security services and United Nations police in the very unexpected event that such a need should arise.

We all know that elections are often unpredictable and tightly fought. We have been encouraged by commitments made across the political spectrum in Timor-Leste to participating peacefully and in a democratic spirit. We would also like to commend Timor-Leste for increasing the number of female candidates for Parliament from one in four to one in three on all political party lists — a better record than my own country, I should say. That will help to give the women of Timor-Leste an even greater say in how their country is governed.

Looking ahead, Australia welcomes the Secretary-General's intention to report to the Council 60 days after the formation of the new Government. His assessment will be a critical element in finalizing decisions on the final pace of UNMIT's drawdown, as well as on the possible roles and functions for the United Nations in Timor-Leste after the departure of the peacekeeping mission. We are pleased that work has started on this planning, and underscore the importance of the incoming Government of Timor-Leste reaching a timely decision on the future shape of a United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. I note President Ramos-Horta's comments today about the emerging consensus on that.

An important factor in those decisions is the success of the very innovative and welcome Joint Transition Plan, for which we commend both the Government and UNMIT. Ongoing dialogue between the Government, UNMIT and bilateral and multilateral partners will be needed to ensure that smooth transition, in which strengthening key institutions, such as the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) in particular, will be a decisive part.

This morning's Member State consultations were very important in that regard. We look forward to continuing those consultations with our fellow partners. In that context, the long-term Strategic Development Plan of the Government itself must remain the cornerstone of international assistance. Last November in Busan, my own Government signed a partnership agreement with Timor-Leste in the margins of the High-level Meeting on Aid Effectiveness that aligns our development assistance with the Strategic Development Plan. Under the agreement, Australian aid focus on strengthening services such as health and education; on improved governance and security, including through continuing institutional support to the PNTL; and on promoting economic growth through agricultural and infrastructure development. Particular attention must continue to be paid by all of us to youth unemployment.

In concluding, Busan was also the venue where Timor-Leste, as leader of the Group of Seven Plus of fragile and post-conflict States (g7+) launched a new deal for engagement in these States, demonstrating the importance of joint partnership rather than just money

in assisting such countries. Timor-Leste's leadership of the g7+ is a very strong statement of how far it has come in its first 10 years as an independent country and Member of the United Nations.

The Timorese have much to celebrate in this historic tenth anniversary year, and we congratulate them on their achievements. We all have much to learn from that success. Finally, I would like to thank South Africa as the new Chair of the Core Group on Timor-Leste for its very hard work in drafting and coordinating the draft resolution to renew UNMIT's mandate. I also thank Brazil for its effective leadership of the Group last year. My own country looks forward to continuing to work with the Group under its new chair.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): I would like to begin by extending a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, President of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his very encouraging statement. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ms. Ameerah Haq for her comprehensive briefing to the Council in her capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

Allow me to recall today in the Council Chamber the efforts and achievements of the people of Timor-Leste witnessed by the international community since the country achieved independence more than a decade ago. The journey has been far from easy, but the Timorese people are successfully taking steps forward, with the assistance of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) and its contributing countries.

Now, the signs of steady progress can be seen everywhere. The Policia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) has now fully assumed primary security responsibility and has been maintaining a situation of calm in the country. The Timorese army, the Falintil-Forças de Defesa de Timor-Leste, has greatly improved its capabilities, assisted by regional friends such as Australia and New Zealand, and has now begun dispatching its personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

To consolidate such achievements and to open the door to further progress on the part of this young, promising country, the two elections to be held this year will be of the utmost importance. If the people of Timor-Leste are to express their political will through the democratic process, it will be critical to maintain the security situation before, during and after the election. In that regard, Japan calls for the further enhancement of the PNTL's capabilities with the assistance of UNMIT, as well as the sustained cooperation of the UNMIT police and the international security forces.

Above all, Japan expects the elections and the subsequent political process to underpin Timor-Leste's first steps as a genuinely self-sustaining sovereign country. For the friends of Timor-Leste in the international community, the successful withdrawal of UNMIT will represent a great success story and the fruit of the peacebuilding endeavours undertaken by the Timorese people.

We have seen a number of such examples in various areas. Timor-Leste showed active engagement, and was highly commended by the participants, in the promotion and protection of human rights through the Universal Periodic Review process of the Human Rights Council last year. The implementation of the National Strategic Development Plan covering the period 2011 to 2030 is already under way. In the context of diplomacy, Timor-Leste is playing a leading role in the Group of Seven Plus, and the country's entry into the Association of Southeast Asian Nations is anticipated in due course.

It should be noted at the same time that sound development always comes with significant challenges. This year's elections will include approximately 100,000 more citizens than the polling five years ago, most of whom are members of the younger generation. Those young people have great potential as a source of human resources. If we ensure that they acquire the necessary skills through education and training, they will be in a better position to exert a positive influence towards the successful future of the country, particularly in light of the current high rate of youth unemployment.

With respect to the economy, Timor-Leste's continuing disproportionate dependence on oil requires gradual reduction so as to make its economy more resilient to any adverse impact from unforeseen fluctuations of the global economy.

In that regard, the Member States consultation on Timor-Leste just held this morning was quite timely.

Japan would like to reiterate in that context that it has already begun the implementation of assistance in the amount of $1.66 million for both elections through the United Nations Development Programme.

Following the elections, Japan also looks forward to seeing the new Government of Timor-Leste conduct a discussion on post-UNMIT plans and make efforts to ensure that support from the international community is consolidated and strengthened.

Japan's commitment as an old friend in the region remains steadfast as Japan attempts to keep its assistance flexible in order to extend a hand in support to our neighbours. It is our great honour and pleasure to continue to walk side by side with the people of Timor-Leste as self-sustaining international partners.

It is also reassuring to know that a draft resolution on Timor-Leste has been prepared by the delegation of South Africa. Japan strongly supports the elements of the draft, and particularly looks forward to the report by the Secretary-General after the elections have been successfully completed. Japan believes that the report will provide a strong basis for constructive discussion in the Core Group and in the Council with regard to UNMIT's smooth transition and the future of Timor-Leste.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Japan's continuing commitment to strengthening the friendship between our countries and cooperating with the Timor-Leste people to support their nation-building efforts.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to thank you for organizing this debate. I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/43) on the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). By the same token, I wish to welcome the presence of His Excellency José Ramos-Horta, President of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste. I thank him for his statement and for his kind words about my country. I also wish to thank Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for her comprehensive briefing.

Malaysia is very much encouraged by the progress achieved in Timor-Leste. We wish to congratulate the leaders and people of Timor-Leste, who, with the assistance of UNMIT and other international partners, have been successful in maintaining peace and stability in the country. The encouraging security situation is testimony to the capability of the judicial and security institutions of Timor-Leste, especially the Polícia Nacional de Timor-Leste (PNTL) in carrying out its policing responsibilities. In that regard, we call for continuing efforts in strengthening security and judicial institutions and in implementing the Joint Transition Plan and the recently announced Strategic Development Plan.

Malaysia is pleased to see the progress made by the Government of Timor-Leste towards democratization and good governance. The upcoming elections are important, and we call on all parties to respect the outcome so as to ensure that stability continues to prevail. We are prepared to consider sending election observers to monitor the elections, if there is a formal invitation from the Government of Timor-Leste.

Malaysia supports the Secretary-General's recommendations for the extension of UNMIT's mandate until 31 December. As the withdrawal of UNMIT is nearing, Malaysia calls for an early discussion on the long-term United Nations engagement in Timor-Leste. We believe that a post-UNMIT United Nations presence in Timor-Leste is necessary. We are always prepared to assist in promoting law and order in Timor-Leste. Malaysia stands ready to support a post-UNMIT presence in Timor-Leste, as part of our contribution towards the development and rebuilding of the country. We believe that economic and social development is crucial for ensuring long-term peace and stability in Timor-Leste.

Malaysia fully supports Timor-Leste's application to become a full member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In the recent ASEAN Coordinating Council meeting held on 17 November 2011, in Bali, Malaysia reiterated its position that Timor-Leste's application should be favourably considered, in line with article 6.2 of the ASEAN Charter and the fact that Timor-Leste meets the geographical criteria stipulated in therein. We look forward to welcoming Timor-Leste as a full member of ASEAN soon.

Malaysia has been actively participating in Timor-Leste since 1999. To date, Malaysia has a total

of 230 police personnel and two military observers serving in the country. At the request of the United Nations, Malaysia has approved the deployment of an additional 20 police personnel to UNMIT, bringing the total to 250. Currently, Malaysia is the top police-contributing country in Timor-Leste. In November 2011, UNMIT requested Malaysia to consider extending the tour of duty of 20 Malaysian United Nations police officers until December 2012, which we have agreed to do. Those officers are part of the core group that is directly involved in the capacity-building activities of UNMIT. Our active participation in UNMIT is a manifestation of Malaysia's long-term commitment to Timor-Leste's development.

Malaysia is continuously committed to assisting Timor-Leste in its nation-building efforts. We have provided substantial assistance to Timor-Leste, especially through the Malaysia Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) and the Malaysian Defense Cooperation Programme (MRCP).

Since 2001, Malaysia has provided assistance to Timor-Leste in the area of human resources development through various training programmes. As of November 2011, a total of 350 officials from Timor-Leste have been trained through the MTCP in the areas of public administration; crisis management and diplomacy; the training of trainers for the Timor-Leste Police Academy; airport management; microfinance; prison administration and management; community nursing; road construction and management; and agriculture. Commencing in 2008, with third-party funding, mainly through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, Malaysia has also provided technical expertise in the fields of agriculture, procurement, macroeconomics and statistics.

Since 2002, a total of 43 officers from the Timor-Leste Armed Forces have attended MRCP programmes. Courses have included instruction for ship divers; language training; a course on law in armed conflicts; instruction on joint warfare and a course on United Nations military observer service.

In 2003, Malaysia contributed $2.56 million as part of it efforts to assist Timor-Leste in developing its defense forces. Malaysia has also extended bilateral assistance in capacity-building programmes and training for PNTL personnel Malaysian police training centres since 2001. Malaysia has also conducted training programmes for participants from Timor-Leste with joint financial assistance from Australia.

Malaysia is pleased with the excellent state of relations it has with Timor-Leste. Malaysia is strongly committed to working closely with Timor-Leste to expand that relationship by harnessing the right synergies for the mutual benefit and prosperity of our two countries and peoples.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Cavanagh (New Zealand): I thank the President of the Council for convening today's debate; the Secretary-General for his report (S/2012/43); and Special Representative Haq for today's briefing and for her tireless work towards a cause very dear to the hearts of New Zealanders. I also extend a warm welcome to the Timorese delegation, led by President Ramos-Horta, a good friend to New Zealand and a dedicated servant to his people over many decades. In the interests of time, I shall read out a summary of the statement we have circulated.

The Secretary-General's latest report paints a positive picture of developments. While past experience suggests a need for caution, all signs suggest Timor-Leste is posed to step decisively forward from a decade of conflict and fragility into one of peace, development and growing self-reliance. Three key issues demand our particular attention in the year ahead.

First, facilitating stable, fair and credible elections must be the top priority — and they seem to be on track. New Zealand was pleased to host Timorese electoral officials to observe our own elections in November last year. We are now considering the best framework for providing observers to the upcoming elections in Timor-Leste.

Secondly, we must make good use of the time remaining to the Mission to consolidate gains made and to prepare the ground for the transfer of residual tasks and responsibilities to national and international partners.

Progress has been made in strengthening security, justice and corrections capacities and core governance and accountability mechanisms. But international support is likely to be necessary long after the departure of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT). In that regard, New Zealand

looks forward to working closely with Timor-Leste on community policing.

Similarly, consolidating transparent, democratic governance, tackling poverty, generating employment and achieving sustainable and inclusive growth are inter-generational challenges. Moreover, the Government and people of Timor-Leste are still grappling with how best to resolve outstanding issues and allegations arising from the crises of 1999 and 2006.

We hope that further progress will be possible in all of those areas during the time remaining to the Mission. But careful planning to transfer key aspects of any unfinished business to national and international partners is important. As a long-term bilateral partner, New Zealand is committed to playing its part. We hope to soon finalize with the Government of Timor-Leste a strategic framework for our bilateral programme.

Thirdly, we must ensure careful coordination during the transition process among all relevant stakeholders. New Zealand has been impressed by the energy and effort invested in UNMIT's transition planning to date, and by the spirit of partnership with which the Mission and the Timorese Government have approached the task. In the next phase of its implementation, engagement with other international partners will be crucial. This morning's Member States consultation was a welcome development.

If events over the coming months proceed as we hope and expect, then we appear to be on track for UNMIT's smooth drawdown and withdrawal by the end of 2012. At the same time, the Mission must retain sufficient flexibility to respond to unexpected challenges or developments.

New Zealand supports the Secretary-General's recommendation to extend UNMIT's mandate for a further nine months, and for the drawdown of its civilian and uniformed personnel. It is essential that the drawdown be carefully managed and proceed in line with security conditions on the ground.

Attention is turning to what will replace UNMIT following its departure. Decisions on a post-UNMIT United Nations presence should be determined in line with identified needs and national priorities for assistance. It is ultimately for the Government that emerges from Timor-Leste's upcoming elections to articulate those.

Identifying a suitable framework for facilitating continued international engagement and effective coordination will be crucial, whether through continued Security Council oversight, the framework of a United Nations political mission or the leadership of a United Nations Development Programme Resident Coordinator. To be most effective, the model chosen must be a genuine United Nations presence, effectively delivering as one, with a mix of expertise and capacities tailored to Timor-Leste's priorities and needs.

The year 2012 is shaping up as a historic year for this proud country. Successful elections and the smooth withdrawal of UNMIT would a suitable way for Timor-Leste to mark its tenth year of independence and to cap what has been a decade of remarkable progress.

New Zealand pays tribute to the tireless effort and commitment of United Nations personnel over the past decade; to the steadfast support of Timor-Leste's many friends and partners in the international community; and above all, to the vision, courage and determination of the people and Government of Timor-Leste, all of which have made that possible.

New Zealand is proud to have played its own part in those efforts and remains a committed partner and loyal friend to Timor-Leste as it steps forward with confidence and hope towards a brighter future.

The President (*spoke in French*): There are no further names inscribed on the list of speakers. I would like to thank everyone for their participation, which has been most active and constructive.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.